

THE EASTER CONCERT

An interesting review of a performance of St. Paul by the Handel and Haydn Society in 1868 is recalled in the following excerpt from Watson's Art Journal (New York). The visiting editor writes:—

"Admitting that St. Paul is a great work, we must as candidly admit that on this occasion its choral interpretation was in every respect worthy of its greatness. . . . Accustomed as we have become to hearing this splendid body of singers, the mighty volume of tone which burst forth at the words 'Lord! thou alone art God!' completely overwhelmed us. . . . The superb performance of this opening chorus was but the initial number of a series of grand vocal efforts which seemed to increase in intensity with the development of the work. In those strongly marked and emphatic choruses, 'Take him away,' 'Stone him to death,' the spirit and the promptness of the singers were manifest; every point was taken up with decision, and the emphatic enunciation of the words gave a feeling of reality which is not often achieved by a chorus, however well it may be trained.

"In the gentler choruses, such as 'Happy and blest, 'How lovely are the messengers,' etc., other fine traits were displayed. The pianos were full, rich, and soft; the great volume of sound was toned down to a gigantic whisper, and the current went as smoothly as though the multitude of voices were one voice, cultivated and directed by art. In the grander choruses, all these qualities were combined. . . . 'O great is the depth', unsurpassed in majesty and grandeur of movement, was sung with a power and weight which could hardly be surpassed; but probably the most impressive of all is that brilliant aspiration, 'Rise up, arise!' which culminates in the wonderful choral, 'Sleepers, wake! a voice is calling!' In this, as the last notes of the warning trumpets died away, and the voices sank into a whisper, the whole audience burst out into a shout of applause, which made the building ring, and still but faintly expressed the enthusiasm."

The Chorus has organized for the purpose of raising money for the purchase of a site, and a determined effort is to be made to realize the hope of the dedication of a new building in 1915.

The Society's Building Fund has increased \$500 since December 29th.

ARMINIUS

ORATORIO. Opus 43. Dedicated to Mr. Georg Henschel. Poem by J. Cüppers. Translated into English by Mrs. Natalia Macfarren. Produced at Zurich under the composer's direction in 1877. Third performance by the Handel and Haydn Society.

PART ONE

INTRODUCTION

No. I

CHORUS

What is't that looms like thunder-cloud afar from dread Thuisko's sacred mountain shrine? The groaning earth with horses' hoofs is shaken and through the air the flash of swords is gleaming! Thus oft the tempest's might in growing fury is dashed against the hoary oaks of old, and breaks at last on some unbending rock. The roar of war resounds from every side. Woe's me. Whence come these tribes of strangers, that in unending hosts advance with dark and threatening mien upon our valleys? Woe's me!

No. 2

BASS RECITATIVE

These are the hosts of Latium; what evil fate hath brought them here? No feud have I with clansmen or with tribe; I guard the altars of my fathers! My spear I lift against the savage boar when through the forest glen he crashes; my only foes are wolf and bison.

CHORUS

No feud have we with clansmen or with tribe; we guard the sacred hearths where dwelt our fathers.

TENOR RECITATIVE

Behold, in serried ranks they come, their clarion's call to arms is wafted upon the breeze in tones triumphant. What eye can count the pointed blades that glitter in the sunlight yonder? On stately charger see their captain fly along the ranks,—a gallant sight! The breeze lifts high his helmet plume and bears aloft his purple mantle. Behold he stays where high the golden eagle spreads his pinions! They come, the scourgers of freedom, insatiate tyrants, breathing slaughter, whose ruthless yoke enslaves the nations!

No. 3

CHORUS

We are the sons of Mars the mighty, from gods and heroes have we sprung. Before our arms unconquered the tribes of earth lie prostrate; they break asunder; like to moulds of clay we crush them. We scaled Athenia's heights and on Asia's sultry plains laid the foeman low. We stood before the gates of Carthage and as victors saw them fall. O'er earth's wide circle bear we aloft our gold-winged eagles triumphant!

Nos. 4-5 BASS RECITATIVE CHORUS

But now your conquering arms shall fail you; your star of glory shall fall and die! We, freeborn sons of Wodan, we have not learned to bend to the stranger's yoke.

DUET. TENOR AND BASS CHORUS

Free soars the eagle high in ether, free

breaks the fount from rocky shaft; the deer roams free through leafy wood; and we, dost think, we'd e'er be slaves? For freedom reigns within our dwelling; Germania's sons are freemen! The sacred oak gives mystic signal, the hallowed fount doth murmur low; we'll drink its wave with solemn rite and brandish high the spear and shield!

PART TWO

IN THE SACRED FOREST

No. 6

SOPRANO RECITATIVE

Through the grove a sound of warning stirs the mystic boughs. He who rules these still recesses sends a tremor through my soul as I bend in prayer. Ranged around the altar hushed stand our tribes in reverent circles bending low their heads. Peace on you, O faithful sons of Wodan! give your mourning people peace, lightning-crowned God! Wodan, humbly we adore thee; we wait for a sign from thee; I, thy priestess, call thee!

CHORUS

Through the oak trees' sacred branches swells a mighty boding and a low mysterious murmur tells us that the God is nigh. Lo, His peace, august and holy, on our hearts descends!

SOPRANO AIR

But like a muttering thunder-cloud the roar of war is drawing nigh and spreads its dark and lurid shadow athwart the land that groans for peace! I see the days to come when carnage wild shall raise her head; when through our glens and woody mountains shall pour the tide of battle's havoc. As from the bosom of the land the deadly shaft its ruin hurls, thus sanguine war o'er powerful lands spreads death and desolation. But yet the people are not faint, because their gods remain to them! With hope and trust then lift your hearts on high; look heavenward, fear ye not, they watch and guard by us: pray to them.

PART THREE

THE INSURRECTION

No. 8

BASS RECITATIVE AND AIR CHORUS

Oh! must I live to tell of my people's shame? Wodan, All-father, art thou wroth? Peace unclouded reigned within our dwellings; the freeborn sons of valiant fathers, our gods in peace we worshipped, until they poured upon our valleys; thus breaks the ravenous wolf on the tranquil pastures, like Rome's relentless robber-bands. Thy piercing eye sees all. O Wodan! thou seest how they oppress thy people! They dare to scourge our freeborn warriors, do justice with the axe and sword, assail our young maidens with impious hands when they go forth unto the springs for water. The festive sounds of joy are heard no more: the minstrel by his hearth sits mourning, though mute he sighs; and silent hangs his harp. Our warriors murmur, and our wives are weeping, and our youths they have struck in fetters. O wretched fatherland! Thou art sunk in bondage and some angered god hath cast night and darkness o'er thee!

No. 9

TENOR RECITATIVE AND AIR

O days of grief and desolation! O sorrow, how wilt thou end? Within my breast there rankles deep a pain past tears' assuaging; a banished man I wander, lone, through lands I ruled as chieftain! The dastard Roman I slaughtered who my betrothed insulted as in tranquil converse we sat by the brook. Yet I slew him and fled. Woe on me that I fled! For they have taken my father; his feeble frame they have chained in a miscreant's fetters, alas! Curst be your race, ye robbers! curst by all gods evermore!

No. II

BASS RECITATIVE AND AIR

Shall we submit to disgrace, we, Wodan's freeborn sons? Uplift your

spears for deadly strife; our burning wrongs we'll avenge in the blood of our tyrants! Come on, companions, from North and South. The day of vengeance comes with the dawn; our righteous wrath shall flame o'er the land! O behold you glorious sun flashing forth in freedom, cleaving the darkness in twain! Ye warriors, tarry then no longer; and ve, Cheruscans, most of all, my clanmen brave, gird your weapons about you! Ye Marsians, who dwell by the verdant stream whose banks now bristle with forts of the Roman, where running the tide glides swifter for shame. Sigumbrians all, men of mighty arm, ye Chaucians and Frisians, I call on all from the Hercynian wolds to the shores of the wide-rolling sea, the home of the storm: United be strong. But woe, if they our fathers' graves despoil; if foreign arts our mind beguile; if we, enslaved, could bend before the stranger.

Brothers in arms, the hour's at hand;
For mighty deeds uplift the brand;
With craft we will lure them in forest's gloom,

And there assure them a desolate tomb.

The roar of battle sounds through the woodlands as through the tempest rolls the thunder. Each valiant youth his spear uplifteth while maidens wind the victor's garland.

No. 12

BASS AND TENOR BATTLE SONG

CHORUS

To arms! for just is our cause! Ranged in order, brothers all! Let freedom's banner wave on high; it shall guide us straight to meet the foe!

Each tribe shout forth its battle cry; Let it resound and rend the sky. On every hill-top now let Liberty's flag be kindled.

PART FOUR

THE BATTLE

No. 13

SOPRANO RECITATIVE AND AIR

Hollow thunders the storm and piercing its gloom the angry lightning flashes. Threatening clouds spread the heavens with darkness. Black night gathers round me! Hoarsely croaking are flocks of ill-omened ravens on the boughs of time-honored oak-trees, corpses and carnage red scenting. Watchful, as hungry wolf in his lair. Wodan's sons behind the rocky ledges are crouching; each deadly spear is poised for the blow. Death they have sworn, and vengeance; their oath to the gods has ascended: to Roman truceless war and death. Wodan, Mighty One, Lord of battles! From the sacred recess of thy shrine guide thou the snow-white steeds, the boders of victory! O haste thee to bring thy children succor! Proudly thy eagle soars o'er the forest; and like rushing of waters rolls thy car of triumph! I hear the clash of thy shield resounding in thunderous strokes from yon rocky height through the valley! Hark! wildly thy steeds are neighing; affrighted, the legions art trembling; they come, advancing in serried numbers, our warriors watch and hem them in; the prisoners clank their chains. Hark! in silence they are marching.

No. 14

CHORUS

With roar as of torrents when tides burst o'er their ramparts our warriors' o'erwhelming force pours on the legions. Their spears like lightning are flashing. They falter; the legions are daunted. From thunder-clouds the mighty Thor doth hurl his barbed lightnings; his golden chariot rolls loud through the sky. Haughty Romans, ye tremble; proud Romans, ye hear him and tremble!

No. 15

SOPRANO RECITATIVE AND CHORUS

Freya, gracious mother! awful one, beauteous giver of blessings, look down on our warriors brave; oh, protect them! Thousands are wounded, their blood is flowing, poured for their fatherland. The battle is raging, the Roman legions are daunted; but our heroes are perishing, glorious death is theirs! Whiterobed and bright the Valkyries are hovering o'er the chosen! Valhalla's gates above them open, and the sound of carousal from gold-roofed Valhalla, where heroes are feasting, is borne on the breeze!

No. 16

TENOR RECITATIVE AND AIR. CHORUS

Ah me, what darkness! death around me closes! The barbed shaft within my wound is rankling; the turf around is reddened with my life-blood! Low surging through the forest gloom methinks I hear the shouts of victory. Hark! yea! Victory! Now, death, thou art welcome! Raise me aloft and bear me to the grove; there lay me in the sacred oak-tree's shadow that I may die on ground that's hallowed. Lo! how the breeze doth bend yon boughs! All-father rides upon his steed of storm! Ah, once again might I behold thee, beloved Thora, maiden sweet; once on my slowly ebbing heart to press thee and give thee one fond kiss

before we part forever! I can no more! I see the white Valkyrie flying down; she waves her hands; oh, joy, she comes; she chooses me for death! Now life, farewell, 't is blissful thus to die.

No. 17

CHORUS

Hark! there comes a shout of victory. I hear triumphant voices fill the vale! Look! they bear aloft a thousand trophies; bright arms and golden eagles proudly gleam.

The flag of freedom waves on high; amid battle's roar it led the van.

Thine, Arminius, our glorious praise!

No. 18

BASS RECITATIVE

No praise to me; the gracious gods alone in sorest need have lent us aid. Thanks, great All-father, Lord of

battles! Victory to thee is due! The power of mighty Rome is maimed by his all-conquering arm. Go forth and tell proud Rome the tidings! Her valiant warriors are slain in you mountain valley.

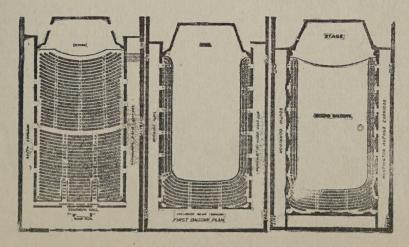
No. 19

HYMN

CHORUS

Germany's sons shall be renowned. Great and glorious are the heroes who have fallen! Their immortal spirits ascend to Wodan; around his golden throne they stand, high above them the twelve mighty Asas; he looks smiling on his heroes wrestling in combat. But we, who dwell in the vales of earth, to Wodan's altar ascend; with branches and flowers embower the path; with songs and with dances renown him; and there we will chant a solemn song to Freedom, our prize and glorious treasure.

PLAN OF HALL.



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EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 7, 1912

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Soprano, MRS. GRACE BONNER WILLIAMS

Alto, MISS JENNIE F. W. JOHNSON

Tenor, MR. FRANKLIN RIKER

Bass, MR. EARL CARTWRIGHT

No. I of Vol. II. of the History of the Handel and Haydn Society from May 1890 to May 1897 including lists of the concerts and of the officers from May 1890 to May 1912 written by W. F. Bradbury is on sale at fifty cents at C. W. Thompson & Co.'s Music Store, A and B Park Street. Vol. I. of the History from 1815 to 1890, at \$1.50, can be bought at A and B Park Street. These can also be obtained by Mail of W. F. Bradbury, 369 Harvard Street, Cambridge.



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